

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN CHAPTER 3



- Claims and propositions are controversial statements that debaters support using reasoned arguments.
- The primary difference between claims and propositions is that claims are narrower statements used to support broader propositions.
- Claims and propositions can be divided into four categories of definition, description, relationship, and evaluation.
- A claim of definition suggests that a certain definition ought to apply to a certain category of things.
- A claim of description indicates how objects, events, and concepts should properly be described.
- A claim of relationship, including relationships of similarity and of cause and effect, goes beyond description to assert how certain things are related to one another.
- A claim of evaluation, including value and policy claims, attaches a value judgment to objects, people, institutions, ideas, and actions.
- Values are central to all four kinds of claims.

NOTES

1. Although we have chosen to use the term *proposition*, others use terms such as *resolution*, *topic*, or *motion* to mean the same thing.

2. The four categories of definition, description, relationship, and evaluation will be used instead of the traditional three categories of fact, value, and policy. Unlike the traditional categories, these new categories of propositions can be distinguished by the kinds of claims used to support them.

3. DeWayne Wickham, "The Cuban Embargo Is the Berlin Wall of the Post-Cold War Period," *Baltimore Sun*, March 5, 2000.